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1. General

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a. Organization

Czechoslovak tank troops are organized in tank brigades, each brigade consisting of four battalions (three tank battalions and one motorized battalion). A motorized division consists of one tank brigade and one motorized brigade. The Tank Corps consists of two tank brigades and one motorized brigade. Tank brigades of motorized divisions are equipped with the British Cromwells and Challengers; tank brigades of the Tank Corps have the Soviet T-34's.

b. Location of Tank Brigades

- 1) Bohemia: 23rd Tank Brigade, Zatec, attached to 5th Motorized Division, Prague.
21st Tank Brigade, Milovice (Strasice), attached to 8th Motorized Division, Kolin.
- 2) Moravia: 22nd Tank Brigade, Dedice, attached to 3rd Motorized Division, Kromeriz.
- 3) Slovakia: 24th Tank Brigade, Turciansky Svaty Martin, attached to 4th Motorized Division, Zilina.

c. Tank Corps, Olomouc, Moravia

- 1) 11th Tank Brigade, located in Moravska Trebova.
- 2) 12th Tank Brigade, located in Sternberk.

- d. In addition to tank brigades, there is a newly created Infantry Tank Battalion located at Milovice, temporarily attached to the 21st Tank Brigade, equipped with German Pz Kwg IV's (Panzer Kraftwagen, over 20 tons) which have an excellent 7.5 cm gun. The Pz Kwg IV's are being

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repaired and assembled from parts left in Czechoslovakia by the Germans at the Ceskomoravska Kolben-Danek Plant in Prague.

- e. Furthermore, there is one Armored Train Battalion with HQ at Milovice and the Tank Training Center at Dedice, comparatively well equipped for its purpose. The Training Center has about 10 British tanks (of the Cromwell and Challenger types), some American Stuarts, about 7 Russian T-34's and two different types of the Stalin. British methods of training are used; training manuals and aids are also from Great Britain.

2. Material

In general, German materiel is used in all the tank brigades.

a. Self-Propelled Guns

- 1) The Panzerjaeger (16 tons), with 7.5 cm gun, is used for training and firing. (Enough German ammunition is available.) It has a good gun but a weak motor and cannot follow tanks well over difficult terrain. Its radio set is unreliable. The Pz Kwg III, with a non-revolving turret is, in fact, a self-propelled gun. The Pz Kwg III is superior to the Panzerjaeger and is to replace the Panzerjaeger in all tank brigades. In 1948, the 11th and 12th Tank Brigades received 12 Pz Kwg III's each.
- 2) Tank brigades of motorized divisions have, on the average, 45 tanks of the Cromwell and Challenger types (of which about 20-25 are serviceable) and 40 Panzerjaegers (about 25 serviceable). A tank brigade, therefore, would now consist of two tank battalions, each battalion having two companies, each company having 10 or 11 tanks. The entire brigade would have approximately 50 tanks, half of them of the British type with 7.5 cm. guns and the other half consisting of the German Panzerjaegers or Pz Kwg III's. This number of tanks was given practical tests in field exercises in the camp at M. Libava in 1948.
- 3) During these field exercises, the Tank Corps put up only one tank brigade consisting of three battalions, each battalion having 24 tanks. There were 68 tanks of the T-34 type (including four borrowed from the Tank Training Center), the rest were Panzerjaegers. The accompanying artillery for this brigade was provided by the 209th Artillery Regiment from Prerov (three batteries). The Soviet T-34 has a good gun (85 mm), a good engine (for naphtha) but a poor radio set (R-9); in wet weather, the set is not serviceable at all because of frequent shorts; the set is not reliable even in dry weather.

b. Radio Sets

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The following three types of radio sets are used:

- 1) British type 19
- 2) Russian type R-9
- 3) German type UK (installed in the Panzerjaegers)

The British sets - as the strongest and most reliable ones - are used for communication between higher headquarters (tank brigade HW, division

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and corps HQ). The Russian R-9's are used for communication within battalions. During the field exercises in 1948, the German radio sets, mounted on German vehicles, were used for radio communication with the Infantry, the Artillery and the Engineers. Special British Air Force sets were used for communication with the Air Force.]

c. Ammunition

- 1) Generally, there is a scarcity of ammunition. In training, German ammunition is fired since there is supposed to be enough of it left in Czechoslovakia. This ammunition, however, is not reliable, and there are frequent premature explosions in front of the gun-barrel.
- 2) In 1948, small quantities of ammunition for the Soviet T-34's and the British Cromwells were distributed to individual tank units. Because of the lack of ammunition, the firing was limited to gunners and tank commanders who fired 12 rounds each. The remaining members of tank crews fired only the machine guns mounted on tanks.

d. Spare Parts and Repairs

- 1) There is an acute shortage of spare parts, particularly for the British types of tanks, in spite of the fact that the British Military Administration (sic) furnished Czechoslovakia with spare parts in 1945-46. Tanks were formerly repaired mostly in the Zbrojovka at Prelouc in Bohemia; at present they are being repaired in the Tank Armory at Senov, near Novy Jicin.
- 2) All tank brigades and the Tank Training Center have their own repair shops.
- 3) The serviceability of tanks is constantly decreasing as the engines are wearing out and cannot be repaired satisfactorily. On the average the serviceability of British Cromwells and Challengers is now only 40%; the serviceability of other types is about 50%.

e. Fuels

The 80-octane gasoline for the British tanks is not of the same quality as that used in Great Britain and is very scarce. There is a general shortage of fuels. At present there are no oils of the quality required for the British tanks, and only substitutes are being used.

f. Other Tank Brigades Vehicles

- 1) The Czechoslovak Army had approximately 30 light American Stuarts, which were used only for training purposes. Recently special courses in the use of these tanks have been given to some SNB units. The Czechoslovak Military Administration has decided or has been asked to hand over these tanks to the Ministry of the Interior. In addition to these, there are approximately 40 British scout cars of the Daimler type used for reconnaissance and communication. Each of these vehicles is equipped with a reliable British radio set (type 19).

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- 2) Personnel cars, trucks, and motorcycles are of British, German, Russian, and domestic origin and are at present in poor shape. Their serviceability is even lower than that of the tanks, i.e. about 35 percent on the average, the reasons being lack of spare parts and lack of technical personnel.
- 3) In 1945-47 most of the repair work in Czechoslovak Army repair shops was done for the Russian Army (by priority). The Czechoslovak engines therefore deteriorated very rapidly.
- 4) A tank brigade has about 60 personnel cars and trucks; of these about 20 are serviceable.

3. Tank Tests and Maneuvers

- a. In February and June 1948, secret tests took place at the camp near Dedice in Moravia. The purpose of these tests was to find the most effective tank obstacles. The following obstacles were tested: tank trenches, pronged iron obstacles, slopes and walls. Three types of tanks were tested: The Soviet T-34 and the Stalin, and the British Cromwell.
- b. The best results were achieved with tank trenches and the pronged iron obstacles anchored by cables. These obstacles therefore will be used in the defense system of the Czechoslovak border. When the iron obstacles were not anchored by iron cables, a Stalin driven at a high speed obliquely against a line of such obstacles could break through area three or four lines of them. 25X1X
- c. A new tank of Czechoslovak make was also tested. From the outside it resembles the Soviet models and on the inside the British models. It is probably manufactured by the Skoda works in Pilsen or by the Tank Department of Ceskomoravska Kolben-Danek in Prague.
- d. In July and August 1948, the exercises in ferrying tanks across the Morava River took place. All Tank Brigades participated in these exercises. German pontoons and British Bailey sets of 40- to 60-ton capacity were used. Russian T-34's and British Cromwells were ferryed across. Both day and night operations were tested. 25X1X
- e. During July and August 1948, all personnel of tank brigades of motorized divisions having British equipment received training in operating the Russian T-34. The training took place in Sternberk, Moravia. Live ammunition was fired at the firing range in Smilov in the training camp of M. Libava. This shows that the Czechoslovak Army expects to receive additional T-34 tanks from the Soviet Union.

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